

Nightmarish night-out at DMCH

Broken ventilators, empty dispensaries, sleeping technicians dog the emergency ward



A medical officer, left, sleeps at 2:55am Monday in a sure sign of neglect of duty, and another staffer, right, fumbles with the lock of the X-ray room of the imaging section at Dhaka Medical College Hospital at 2:07am yesterday.

NAIMUL HAQ

It was 1:50am when critically-injured Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader Abdul Al Hadi was brought to the emergency ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Bleeding profusely from bullet and stab wounds, Hadi was put on a clattery trolley and taken to the operating theatre where three bullets were removed from his body.

With his life hanging in the balance, the patient was then rushed to the intensive care unit (ICU) upstairs to be hooked up to a lifesaving ventilating machine as some 150 anxious fellow students crowded the ICU entrance.

But four out of the eight ventilators at the country's most modern ICU had been out of order for weeks together and there was none available for Hadi.

On-duty doctors said apathetic DMCH authorities did not get the ventilators fixed despite written requests.

Meanwhile, Hadi was being

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Murali joins 500-wkt club

AFP, Kandy

Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan on Tuesday became the youngest and quickest to take 500 Test wickets, achieving the feat in the second Test against Australia here.

The off-spinner, who turns 32 next month, reached the landmark in his 87th Test when he bowled Michael Kasprovicz.

Retired West Indian fast bowler Courtney Walsh (519) and Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne (501) are the others to take 500 wickets in

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Paralysed Garo boy 'missing' on arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Modhupur police yesterday took away Utpal Nakrek, a paralysed Garo teenager, from a Savar clinic where the indigenous boy was undergoing treatment for bullet injuries suffered in police fire on a Garo demonstration last January, clinic authorities said.

The demonstrators were protesting a government move to convert the Modhupur forest into a national park when police and forest guards opened fire, killing a demonstrator and injuring 25 others including Utpal.

The 10th grader took a bullet in the back, which completely paralysed the lower half of his body, and was being treated at Savar's Centre for Rehabilitation for the Paralysed (CRP).

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PM seeks help for dev politics

UNB, Mymensingh

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said those involved in destructive politics would be swept away in the wave of development initiated by the coalition government.

She sought people's support for carrying forward the politics of development, facing the forces of destruction.

Addressing a public meeting at Dhobaura Mohamadia Madrassah ground, the prime minister listed the government's development works in various sectors.

She said the alliance government had already fulfilled a number of election pledges and would implement others.

The prime minister inaugurated the construction work of Jagrakhal bridge at Dhobaura. The 100-meter bridge will be built by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) at a cost of Tk 1.20 crore in a year.

State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain, local MP Dr Mohammad Ali, MA Karim Abbasi MP, Delwar Hossain Khan Dulu MP, Shah Shahid Sarwar MP, Nurul Kabir Shahin MP and ex-MP Advocate Nozmul Huda, among others, addressed the meeting. Local BNP president Advocate Fazul Huq presided.

Criticising misdeeds and misrule of the previous government,

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Correction

The Daily Star report headlined 'JB targets top 50 defaulters' and published on March 15 mentioned the name of 'Transcom Fibres Pvt. Ltd.' as one of the 50 defaulters. The Janata Bank made a mistake in naming the company and the defaulting company's name should read 'Transocean Fibres and Processors (BD) Ltd.' instead.

Officials concerned acknowledged yesterday that the Janata Bank defaulters' list, prepared for recovery of bad loans, inadvertently mentioned Transocean, Humayun Kabir Mollah and Iqbal Kabir Mollah are the chairman and managing director of Transocean, headquartered at 115-120 Adamjee Court, Motijheel.

9 die in Pak drive against al-Qaeda

AGENCIES, Wana

Pakistani troops yesterday engaged in a major gun battle with tribesmen close to the Afghan border.

At least four soldiers and five armed militants have been killed in the drive against fugitive Taleban and al-Qaeda members, a military spokesman said.

Local residents say that heavy gunfire can be heard coming from both sides.

Pakistan has conducted several recent operations against suspects believed to be hiding in the area. A similar US operation is under way in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's military spokesman Major General Shaikat Sultan said the frontier troops had launched a

"search operation".

A Pakistani intelligence officer told the Associated Press that troops had fired mortars in a clash that led to casualties on both sides.

Local residents say troops have cordoned off the area.

"We are not allowed to go out of our homes," one resident, Qasim Khan, told AP.

On Monday, President Pervez Musharraf said several hundred militants could be sheltering in the remote tribal area.

He issued an ultimatum to the fugitives, whom he described as foreigners, to surrender.

"We have given them the option that if they lay down their arms we will not hand them over to any other force."

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Restriction on Sundarbans swimming

UNB, Bagerhat

Restrictions have been imposed on tourists taking bath in Sundarbans beach and canals following Sunday's tragic incident in which 11 students of Khulna University drowned at Badamtala beach.

Meanwhile, two forest officials, Tayeb Ali and Nurul Islam, were suspended as they failed to avert the accident.

Forest Officer Tariqul Islam told the news agency yesterday that tourists coming to the Sundarbans are restricted to dip in rivers and canals. No river craft will be allowed to enter the area without registration. Teachers must accompany the student tourists.

He said some restrictions are existed but the tourists don't obey

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WP threatens agitation series

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Workers' Party (WP) yesterday threatened to launch a series of programmes, including hartal and siege, to dislodge the BNP-led coalition from office.

The left-leaning party at a rally at Paltan Maidan described the ruling BNP-Jamaat alliance as anti-people and a patron of fundamentalists and communal forces.

"The 29-month-old government bears the hallmarks of misrule," said WP President Rashed Khan Menon, who also called for an investigation into the investment of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her son abroad.

Menon threatened that a people's inquiry would be opened into what he said was the shady investment in a country in southeastern Asia if an independent commission did not investigate the allegation.

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Activists stage a hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday, demanding direct elections to reserved parliamentary seats for women.

2 outlaws lynched in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Two outlaws suffering mob beating in the city Monday night died at Khulna Medical College Hospital prison cell yesterday.

The victims were identified as Shaheen, 32, of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party's (PBCP) M-L faction and Shujol, 35, of the

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Nine killed in Iraq attacks

AFP, Baghdad

Gunmen killed four US relief workers affiliated with a Christian evangelical church and two Germans and three Iraqis, one of them an Iraqi translator for US army as insurgents made civilians their target of choice.

Two Germans and two Iraqis were killed when their car was fired on near the Iraqi city of Karbala, Germany's public television station ZDF reported yesterday.

It said the two Germans were hydraulic engineering specialists.

According to ZDF, the US-led civil administration reported that the bodies of the two Germans had been taken to a mortuary.

Four American aid workers with

the Southern Baptist International Mission Board were killed and another wounded in a drive-by shooting in Mosul late Monday, the US military and the board said.

And last morning an Iraqi female translator, working with the US army in Mosul, was shot dead in her car, police said.

The top US commander on the ground, Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, downplayed yesterday the impact of Spanish troops leaving Iraq after the Spanish prime minister-elect threatened to pull out his nation's forces by June 30.

Amidst the violence and political machinations, US pro-consul in Iraq Paul Bremer visited Halabja on

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NCCB director charged with laundering

Bac also files cases against 7 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bureau of Anti-corruption (Bac) yesterday filed five separate money-laundering cases against eight people including Director of National Credit and Commerce Bank Limited (NCCB) Mohammad Ali.

Bac alleged that the accused laundered a total of Tk 70.60 crore by using fake business identities.

The other accused are SM Jahangir Hossain, manager of NCCB's Islampur branch, GM Fakrudin, manager of Motijheel main branch, Mokhter Ahmed, manager of Majhirghat branch,

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'Criminal' killed in gunbattle

Pedestrian, 5-year-old boy injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged criminal was shot dead exchanging fire with police while a pedestrian and a five-year-old boy sustained bullet injuries in the crossfire at Muradpur in Shyampur yesterday.

Being tipped off, Shyampur police raided an abandoned house at Muradpur Bhabani Bagicha at 4:30pm. Criminals, gathered there for taking drugs, fired at police when

they peeped over the wall, said Sub-Inspector Anwar.

Police retaliated and Mamun, an alleged criminal, sustained bullet injuries. He died on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Stray bullets hit passerby Joyal Kabiraj, 75, in the leg and five-year-old Sumon in the hand, he added.

They were undergoing treatment

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BNP men foil pry teacher interview

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Leaders and activists of ruling BNP's student and youth wings went on the rampage at Rangamati District Council building, beating up five candidates and driving away many others in a bid to stop interview for recruitment of 250 primary school teachers.

The incident forced the authorities to postpone the interview.

Alleging corruption and irregularities in the recruitment and deprivation of Bangla-speaking people from their job quota, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Jubo Dal men demanded resignation of Maniklal Dewan, chairman, and all four members of the interim executive committee of Rangamati District Council.

The attackers confined Maniklal Dewan to his office room and took away viva-voce cards of some candidates.

Witnesses said more than 30 JCD and Jubo Dal activists led by district JCD President Mamunur Rashid, General Secretary Mahbubul Baset and Jubo Dal district unit President Saiful Islam raided the district council building at around 9:30am. They ransacked the office rooms and damaged furniture, flower vases and windowpanes.

The activists then held a rally on the district council premises and accused some members of the interim committee of the council and some officials and employees

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| Prayer Timings | | |
|----------------|-------|--------|
| March 17 | | |
| | Azan | Jamaat |
| Fair | 5-00 | 5-35 |
| Zohr | 12-45 | 1-15 |
| Asr | 4-30 | 4-45 |
| Maghrib | 6-14 | 6-18 |
| Esha | 7-45 | 8-15 |

Source: Islamic Foundation